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PATENT



Attorney Docket No. 86769.0006

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)
Michael P. MILLER, et al.) Art Unit: 3623
Application No. 10/005,759)
Filed: December 7, 2001) Examiner: Michael C. HECK
For: ACCELERATED PROCESS)
IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK)

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Commissioner for Patents
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56 and 1.97(b), Applicants bring to the attention of the Examiner the document listed on the attached Form PTO-1449, which the Examiner may deem relevant to the patentability of the above-identified application. Applicants herewith only provide a copy of the US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0078432 A1 as the remaining references listed in the PTO-1449 were cited by the Examiner in the Office Action dated March 12, 2003.

This information disclosure statement is being filed within one of the following time periods: within three months of the filing date of this application other than a continued prosecution application, or within three months of the date of entry into the national stage of this international application, or before the

mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits, or before the mailing of a first Office action after the filing of a request for continued examination under §1.114, or not more than three months from the mailing date of the International Search Report in Applicants' corresponding International Application No. PCT/US02/39193. Therefore, no certification under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(e) or fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17(p) is required.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better art exists and does not constitute an admission the listed documents are material or constitute "prior art." If the Examiner applies the documents as "prior art" against any claims in the application and Applicants determine that the cited documents do not constitute "prior art" under United States law, Applicants reserve the right to present to the Office the relevant facts and law regarding the appropriate status of such document. Applicants further reserve the right to take appropriate action to establish the patentability of the disclosed invention over the listed documents, should the documents be applied against the claims of the present application.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the listed documents and evidence that consideration by making appropriate notations on the attached PTO-1449. The references contained in this information disclosure statement were first cited in the attached International Search Report (US Searching Authority) dated March 20, 2003 in Applicants' corresponding

International Application No. PCT/US02/39193 or in the Office Action dated
March 12, 2003.

Except for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is
hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire
pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17
which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any
overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1349. This paragraph is intended to be a
CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME in accordance with
37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

HOGAN & HARTSON LLP

Dated: June 10, 2003

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